

Message Text

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SUBJECT: OCCIDENTAL-LIBYA DISPUTE

REF: TRIPOLI 1119

1. IN CONNECTION WITH THE DISPUTE BETWEEN
OCCIDENTAL AND THE LIBYAN GOVERNMENT WHICH HAS
RESULTED IN AN ORDER PREVENTING ALL NON-LIBYAN
EMPLOYEES OF OXY FROM LEAVING THE COUNTRY, THE
DEPARTMENT SHOULD HAVE THE FOLLOWING BACKGROUND
CONCERNING LIBYAN IMMIGRATION REGULATIONS.

2. FOREIGN WORKERS IN LIBYA MAY APPLY FOR
WHAT IS CALLED AN "EXIT-RE-ENTRY VISA" WHICH
PERMITS THE BEARER TO LEAVE THE COUNTRY FOR A
TEMPORARY STAY ABROAD. THESE EXIT-RE-ENTRY
VISAS ARE USUALLY GRANTED BY LIBYAN IMMIGRATION
AUTHORITIES IN A WEEK TO TEN DAYS FROM THE
DATE OF APPLICATION, ALTHOUGH THE PROCESS CAN
BE SPEEDED UP THROUGH THE PAYMENT OF BRIBES.
MOST-UPWARDS OF 80 PERCENT - OF U.S.
EMPLOYEES OF OCCIDENTAL ARE PROBABLY IN POSSESSION
OF VALID EXIT-RE-ENTRY VISAS, AND MANY EMPLOYEES

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HAD HOPED TO USE THEM OVER THE OCTOBER 3-7

HOLIDAYS TO TAKE A VACATION ABROAD. THE OXY EMPLOYEES TURNED BACK AT THE AIRPORT HAD VALID VISAS OF THIS SORT. SO-CALLED "FIELD BREAK PERSONNEL," THAT IS THOSE WHO SPEND, IN OXY'S CASE, FOUR WEEKS IN THE DESERT FOLLOWED BY THREE WEEKS WITH THEIR FAMILIES OUTSIDE LIBYA ARE MORE SERIOUSLY Affected BY THE PROHIBITION ON TRAVEL THAN PERSONNEL BASED IN LIBYA, AND OXY PRESIDENT ESPEY IS TRYING TO GET THE RULE RELAXED TO ALLOW PEOPLE IN THIS CATEGORY TO FOLLOW THEIR NORMAL ROTATION SCHEDULE.

3. BEFORE AN EMPLOYEE CAN LEAVE LIBYA WITH HIS PERSONAL EFFECTS, HE MUST OBTAIN WHAT IS CALLED A "FINAL EXIT" VISA. THIS INVOLVES AN ONEROUS AND TIME-CONSUMING ROUND OF OBTAINING OFFICIAL CLEARANCES (FROM THE ELECTRICITY COMPANY, THE TRAFFIC POLICE, ETC.) AND USUALLY TAKES SOME WEEKS TO OBTAIN. FEW, IN ANY, OF THE U.S. EMPLOYEES OF OXY HAVE THIS VISA, AND IN THEORY BEFORE LEAVING ALL WOULD BE REQUIRED TO GET IT. IF THE COMPANY SHOULD REALLY GO THROUGH WITH ITS INTENTION TO PULL ALL ITS EMPLOYEES OUT (AND MANY OXY EMPLOYEES HERE FERVENTLY HOPE IT WILL NOT), AND IF THE LIBYAN GOVERNMENT INSISTS ON FOLLOWING ITS COMPLICATED AND ONEROUS REGULATIONS GOVERNING THE ISSUANCE OF FINAL EXIT VISAS TO THE LETTER, THERE COULD BE A MAJOR BUREAUCRATIC SNAFU.

4. IN SHORT, DEPARTMENT SHOULD BE AWARE OF THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN "EXIT-RE-ENTRY VISAS," WHICH MOST U.S. OXY EMPLOYEES HAVE, AND "FINAL EXIT" VISAS, WHICH ALL WOULD HAVE TO GET IN THE EVENT OF A PULLOUT, DEPARTMENT SHOULD ALSO BE AWARE THAT BAN ON TRAVEL FALLS PARTICULARLY HARD ON "FIELD BREAK PERSONNEL."

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